THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS 17 MAY 1910

THE PENSION BUILDING
441 F STREET, N.W., SUITE 312
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001

202-504-2200
202-504-2195 FAX

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

18 April 1991

AM 10:00 CONVENE, 441 F Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of minutes:

21 February 1991

B. Dates of next meetings:

16 May 1991
20 June 1991

C. Southwest Asia Service Medal. Report.

D. Senate Hearing on Architectural Excellence and Design Competitions, 14 March 1991. Report.

E. Selection of artists for design of commemorative coins and medals. Discussion.

II. SUBMISSIONS AND REVIEWS

A. National Park Service, National Capital Region

1. CFA 18/Apr/91-1, White House Visitors Center, Baldridge Hall, Commerce Building, 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Entrance modification design.

2. CFA 18/Apr/91-2, The Ellipse Comfort Station, E and 15th Streets, N.W. Design for new facility.

B. U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation

CFA 18/Apr/91-3, Navy Memorial, Pennsylvania Avenue at 8th Street, N.W. Further designs for bas-reliefs. (Previous submission of ongoing review: CFA 21/Feb/91-2.)

C. Department of Defense

CFA 18/Apr/91-5, Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia. Heating and cooling plant replacement. Concept review.

D. Government of the District of Columbia, Department of Public Works

CFA 18/Apr/91-6, University of the District of Columbia, Connecticut Avenue at Van Ness Street, N.W. Phase III-A, two new buildings. Confirmation of working drawings. (Previous: CFA 31/Jul/86-7.)

E. Department of Veterans Affairs

CFA 18/Apr/91-7, Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Administration Medical Center, North Capitol and Irving Streets, N.W. Design for addition to main hospital building.

F. General Services Administration

CFA 18/Apr/91-8, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. Exterior renovation, handicapped ramp, and rooftop cooling towers.

G. Smithsonian Institution

CFA 18/Apr/91-9, Hirshhorn Museum, Independence Avenue at 7th Street, S.W. Plaza resurfacing and landscaping. Confirmation of working drawings. (Previous: CFA 13/Dec/90-4, CFA 25/Oct/90-4, CFA 19/Oct/89-1.)

H. District of Columbia Government, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs

1. Shipstead-Luce Act

a. S.L. 91-59, 6200 Oregon Avenue, N.W. Addition of new facilities, Army Distaff Foundation. Design Development. (Previous: CFA 21/Feb/91.)

H. District of Columbia Government, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs

b. Appendix I.

2. Old Georgetown Act

a. Appendix II.

3. Confirmation of approval of Appendices dated 21 March 1991. Report.

12:30 PM H. Freer Gallery

CFA 18/Apr/91-10, Inspection of acquisitions.

Item not on printed agenda: Designs for new White House guardhouses.

SHIPSTEAD-LUCE SUBMISSIONS

NO.	ADDRESS AND OWNER	PROJECT
S.L. 91-71 HPA. 91-241	2936 Macomb Street, N.W. Robin Residence	Rear addition - conceptual

ACTION: No objection to concept of rear addition as shown in supplemental drawings received and dated 5 April 1991.

S.L. 91-74 HPA. 91-249	2019 Allen Place, N.W. Douglas Povich Residence	Rear and roof addition, deck - permit

ACTION: No objection to proposed alterations which have a minimal impact on bordering Rock Creek Park. Recommend review by Historic Preservation Review Board for assessing impact on neighboring residences.

S.L. 91-85 HPA. 91-305	122 Maryland Avenue, N.E. Clarence Mitchell Office	Ramp for handicapped access - conceptual

ACTION: No objection to concept of ramp for handicapped access. Recommend use of additional landscape elements to diminish the impact of the new structure on the historic building.

S.L. 91-87 HPA. 91-309	3000 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. Columbia Realty Venture Cathedral Mansions Center	Entrance door replacements - permit

ACTION: No objection to issuance of permit for proposed replacement of entrance doors to main lobbies and rear. Proposed work conforms to previously approved concept for alterations. See previous Action (S.L. 90-166).

NO.	ADDRESS AND OWNER	PROJECT
S.L. 91-89	8132 W. Beach Drive, N.W. Harry and Emily Volz Residence	Kitchen addition - permit

ACTION: No objection to issuance of permit for proposed addition to kitchen.

S.L. 91-90	2450 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. The Republic of Korea Embassy Building	Replacement of windows, and new penthouse screen - permit

ACTION: No objection to proposed new penthouse screen nor to replacement of windows.

S.L. 91-91	1800 Shepherd Street, N.W. Cynthia Diane Residence	Replace fence - permit

ACTION: No objection to issuance of permit for proposed replacement of fence as shown in supplemental drawings received and dated 17 April 1991.

S.L. 91-92	1000 Independence Avenue, S.W. GSA Forrestal Building	Improvements to sidewalk and landscaping - permit

ACTION: No objection to issuance of permit for proposed improvements to sidewalk and landscaping in accordance with modifications to building terrace previously approved. Installation of trees will occur at a later date, subject to review by the Commission.

S.L. 91-93	429 N Street, S.W. Tiber Island Co-op The Law House	Alterations to pool house - conceptual

ACTION: No objection to concept of proposed alterations to pool house.

OLD GEORGETOWN SUBMISSIONS

NO.	ADDRESS AND OWNER	PROJECT
O.G. 91-47 HPA. 91-272	2714 Dumbarton Street, N.W. Epiphany Catholic Church	Metal gate - permit

ACTION: No objection to issuance of permit for proposed metal gate. Recommend metal pickets have pointed tips.

O.G. 91-48 HPA. 91-275	2901 M Street, N.W. Rosinski, Inc. Citibank	Backlit signs - permit

ACTION: No objection to issuance of permit for proposed signs composed of individual backlit letters.

O.G. 91-51 HPA. 91-283	2804 P Street, N.W. Mr. Bruce Lehman Residence	Pool, addition to rear and outbuildings - conceptual

ACTION: No objection to general concept design. Recommend additional study of balustrades and/or railings at both sides of proposed deck over parking pad. Submit working drawings for permit review when ready.

O.G. 91-52 HPA. 91-284	1055 Thomas Jefferson St., N.W. 1055 Th. Jefferson Associates The Foundry Building	Wall mounted flagpoles - permit

ACTION: No objection to issuance of permit for two proposed flagpoles.

NO.	ADDRESS AND OWNER	PROJECT
O.G. 91-54 HPA. 91-286	3607 M Street, N.W. Exxon Company U.S.A. Exxon Gas Station	New gas station - permit

ACTION: No objection to issuance of permit for proposed new gas and convenience station as shown in supplemental working drawings received and dated 9 April 1991. Drawings conform to previously approved concept (See. O.G. 88-255). Erect on-site materials panel for approval prior to above-grade construction.

Discussion Item	2715 M Street, N.W. The Walton Companies	Sun screens on roof and windows

COMMENTS: The mesh sun screen was to be applied to the glass roof and upper windows only. The Board had no objection to its application to the roof. However, the members did object to its application to the windows whether in part or as a uniform window covering for the entire building. They agreed to look at other materials but suggested that the architect try the proposed mesh on one window first before proceeding farther.

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COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS PRE-MEETING TOUR - 18 April 1991

CONVENE: 8:00 AM
Pension Building, Suite 312, 441 F Street, N.W.

1. Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. Exterior renovation, handicapped ramp and rooftop cooling tower.

2. West Executive Drive and State Place, N.W. Modifications to existing guard houses.

3. The Ellipse, E and 15th Streets, N.W. Design for comfort station.

4. White House Visitors Center, Baldridge Hall, Commerce Building, 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Entrance modification design.

5. University of the District of Columbia, Connecticut Avenue at Van Ness Street, N.W. Confirmation of working drawings for two new buildings, Phase III-A.

Members Present:

J. Carter Brown, Chairman
Neil H. Porterfield, Vice Chairman
Joan Abrahamson
Adele Chatfield-Taylor
George Hartman
Robert Peck

Staff Present:

Donald B. Myer
Jose Martinez-Canino

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MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

18 April 1991

The meeting was convened at 10:30 a.m. in the Commission of Fine Arts offices at the Pension Building, 441 F Street, N.W., Washington, D. C., after a tour of project sites.

Members present: Hon. J. Carter Brown, Chairman
Hon. Neil H. Porterfield, Vice-Chairman
Hon. Joan Abrahamson
Hon. Adele Chatfield-Taylor
Hon. George E. Hartman
Hon. Robert A. Peck

Staff present: Mr. Charles H. Atherton, Secretary
Mr. Donald B. Myer, Assistant Secretary
Mr. Jeffrey R. Carson
Mrs. Sue Kohler
Mr. Jose Martinez-Canino

National Capital Planning Commission staff present: Mr. Patrick Tribe

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of the minutes of the 21 February 1991 meeting. The minutes were approved without objection.

B. Dates of next meetings. Approved as:

16 May 1991
20 June 1991

C. Southwest Asia Service Medal. Report. The Secretary showed a drawing of this medal, designed without review by the Commission of Fine Arts; he said the reason given by the Institute of Heraldry was that there was no time for review, that it was a high priority item. The members all agreed that it was a very poor design, and the Secretary was concerned that the perceived need to include one design element for each of the services involved was going to become a requirement, thus making it very difficult to

design any good military medals in the future. He said the Commission had received a letter from Dr. Charles P. McDowell, Vice-President of the Orders and Medals Society of America, that was critical of the design, and he had invited him to speak briefly to the Commission on this matter.

Dr. McDowell said he was increasingly disturbed by the quality of American medals when compared to those of other countries. He showed two British medals--one issued for Vietnam participation and the other for the Falklands campaign--and compared them to the U.S. Vietnam Service medal and the Humanitarian Service medal. He said he was dismayed at the quality of the Southwest Asia Service medal and urged the Commission to reject the design, saying that he doubted that it had been struck yet.

The Secretary said he would like to write the Institute of Heraldry on this matter; there were no objections and approval for such a letter was granted.

D. Senate hearing on Architectural Excellence and Design Competitions, 14 March 1991. The Secretary said that for the record he would like to announce that Mr. Peck had testified before Senator Moynihan and stated the Commission's generally favorable attitude towards design competitions; he said he thought the testimony had been well-received. Mr. Peck said he would like to thank the staff for its aid in preparing his testimony. Exhibits A, A-1

E. Selection of artists for design of commemorative coins and medals. Discussion. The Secretary noted that the results of previous efforts by the Commission and the Mint to find competent artists had been less than satisfactory, and said he thought it was time to throw a wider net. He recalled an article that he had circulated recently to the members from Numismatic News lamenting the state of coin design. He said he would like authority from the Commission to contact art schools and universities and solicit general ideas and examples of work from faculty and students; he noted that he had discussed this with the Deputy Director of the Mint and could report that the Mint was in full agreement. He noted also that the Commission had the legal authority to advise on the selection of artists and had done this many times in the past with the Mint.

The members all agreed that this would be a good course to pursue. Ms. Chatfield-Taylor suggested talking to the head of the Design Arts program at the NEA and also mentioned the Rhode Island School of Design as one of the schools to contact.

II. SUBMISSIONS AND REVIEWS

A. National Park Service, National Capital Region

1. CFA 18/APR/91-1, White House Visitors Center, Baldridge Hall, Commerce Building, 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Entrance modification design. The Assistant Secretary noted that the members had seen the site on their pre-meeting tour and then introduced Jim McDaniel from the Park Service's White House liaison division to discuss the project.

Mr. McDaniel said there was a pressing need for more visitor facilities, since there was often a wait of nearly three hours for the White House tours during the peak season. He said the nearby Commerce Building could provide the needed space in the large room just inside the north entrance. Orientation and educational facilities could be accommodated as well as ticketing and other information. The facility would be open all day every day and could take the place of a tour for those who were unable to make reservations for the brief periods when the White House was open to visitors. Mr. McDaniel said they were planning to have some artifacts from the White House on display.

Architect Mary Oehrlein was introduced and showed her plans to restore and use the interior space; she also discussed the intended alterations to the exterior, which would include replacing the aluminum store-front doors installed in the 1970s with other doors more in keeping with the style of the building, and replacing the old red awnings with new blue ones. There would also be banners to announce the location of the visitors center.

There was a discussion of using overhead television to give information to those waiting in the queue for tickets, and the Chairman suggested that it might be a good idea to have historical information available on the Federal Triangle also, since the Commerce Building was part of that grouping. Mr. Peck and Ms. Abrahamson asked if the planters near the entrance could be removed; Mr. McDaniel said they had been placed there by PADC, not the Park Service, but he would discuss it with them and see if they could be taken away. There were no further questions, and the visitors center alterations were unanimously approved. Exhibit B

2. CFA 18/APR/91-2, the Ellipse comfort station, E and 15th Streets, N.W. Design for new facility. Mr. McDaniel said the existing facility, in the same area, was underground and was not equipped for the handicapped. He said the new facility would upgrade the old one and also accommodate the functions of the various kiosks presently scattered on the Ellipse that tend to obstruct the view. The square footage of the new building, including the colonnade that would run around all four sides, would be about the same as the old facility plus the existing kiosks.

Architect Mary Oehrlein was again introduced and discussed her design. There were no objections to the design as such, but the members were all of the opinion that a central form, rather than a long rectangle, would not be so directional and would work better on the site. They were not in agreement with Ms. Oehrlein that it would not be approached from all sides, and they thought the service facilities could be placed in such a way that they would not have to take up one entire side of the building. Ms. Oehrlein said the form and siting had been to some extent determined by underground utilities, but it had been determined that there was more leeway than originally thought, and she would see what she could do. It was recommended that she explore ways to put as much of the facility as possible underground, but the Chairman cautioned that there was an elm tree in the area that had to be saved. Exhibit C

B. U. S. Navy Memorial Foundation

CFA 18/APR/91-3, Navy Memorial, Pennsylvania Avenue at 8th Street, N.W. Further designs for bas-reliefs. (Previous submission of ongoing review: CFA 21/FEB/91-2.) Staff member Sue Kohler introduced Captain Bob Jones from the Navy Memorial Foundation and sculptor/coordinator Leo Irrea to show the members the last two concept designs for this series and photographs of final maquettes for six other designs previously seen.

Captain Jones first showed a small, sketchy clay model for "Inland Operations/Vietnam"; this was a new concept design, and the members thought it a distinct improvement over the previous designs seen and disapproved. It, too, showed a swift boat and the banks of a river in Vietnam, but from a different vantage point than the earlier versions. It was approved for further development. The second concept design was for "Navy and Space". The scene was the rescue of a space capsule and its astronauts by the crew of an aircraft carrier. It was submitted as an ink sketch and approved for further development.

Captain Jones then showed photographs of final clay models for six other plaques. "The Naval Academy", "Navy Exploration", and "Farragut at Mobile Bay" were given final approval with no further recommendations. "Marine Corps/Inchon" and "Merchant Marine/Armed Guard" were also approved with the following recommendations: the stance of the principal figure in "Marine Corps/Inchon" seemed awkward, particularly the right leg, and it was suggested that this be studied further; the ties holding the tank to the deck in "Merchant Marine/Armed Guard" were too fragile and would look better if they were heavier. Although the members all liked the "Silent Service" plaque very much, there was concern that the two submarines appeared to be in different planes; Sculptor/Coordinator Leo Irrera, who was present at the meeting, was asked to talk to the sculptor about this.

Captain Jones then passed around listings of the titles to go above each plaque. They were very brief, with only a few words of explanation. The titles were approved, with the following suggestions for change: It was thought that "Speak softly and carry a big stick" would be a better explanatory phrase for the "Great White Fleet" than "Projecting American Power and Prestige", and it was recomended that the letter and number designations following the names of the ships in the "Navy Supply" panel be deleted in the interest of brevity and conformity with other ship titles in the series. Exhibit D

C. Department of Defense

CFA 18/APR/91-5, Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia. Heating and cooling plant replacement. Concept review. Staff member Jeffrey Carson showed photographs of the area, explained the nature of the project, and then introduced Jerry Shiplett from the Pentagon. After noting the 50th anniversary of the Pentagon, Mr. Shiplett said the plant needed to be replaced because both the structure and the equipment were obsolete. He said the site had been determined by the utilities available. He showed photographs with a model of the structure superimposed; it showed two stacks 90-feet high, but he said they could be cut to 65 feet. Engineer Jerry Snyder said a certain height was needed to disperse pollutants.

There was a discussion about how the stacks could be lowered and/or placed closer together. Architect Charles Bryant said his firm had been working on the stack problem and had already gone from six to two; he said they were now investigating making them larger in diameter and shorter, and perhaps it would be possible to use just one. It was suggested that, if low enough, they could be put behind a wall and given an architectural treatment. Mr. Bryant also said he had been working on the proper landscaping for the building, and had spent some time determining what kind of "flavor" the building should have--industrial or more like the Pentagon; he said he had decided to do something complementary to the Pentagon. There was general approval of what Mr. Bryant had done, with the exception of the stacks, and he was asked to work on those further and come back at a later meeting. Exhibit E

D. Government of the District of Columbia, Department of Public Works

CFA 18/APR/91-6, University of the District of Columbia, Connecticut Avenue at Van Ness Street, N.W. Phase III-A, two new buildings. Confirmation of working drawings. (Previous: CFA 31/JUL/86-7.) Mr. Carson recalled the 1986 concept approval for these buildings and said the plans had not changed. He introduced Charles Bryant of Bryant & Bryant to answer questions. Mr. Bryant said the materials would be the same as those used elsewhere on the

ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN

32 COL. OF PHYSICAL SCIENCE & ENG. TECHNOLOGY

38 STUDENT AFFAIRS / UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

39 ADMINISTRATION

41 LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL & FINE ARTS

42 COL. OF PHYSICAL SCIENCE & ENG. TECHNOLOGY

43 POWER PLANT

44 COL. OF LIFE SCIENCE

48 (EAST) UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM

46 (WEST) MUSIC & DANCE
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL & FINE ARTS

47 PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES CENTER

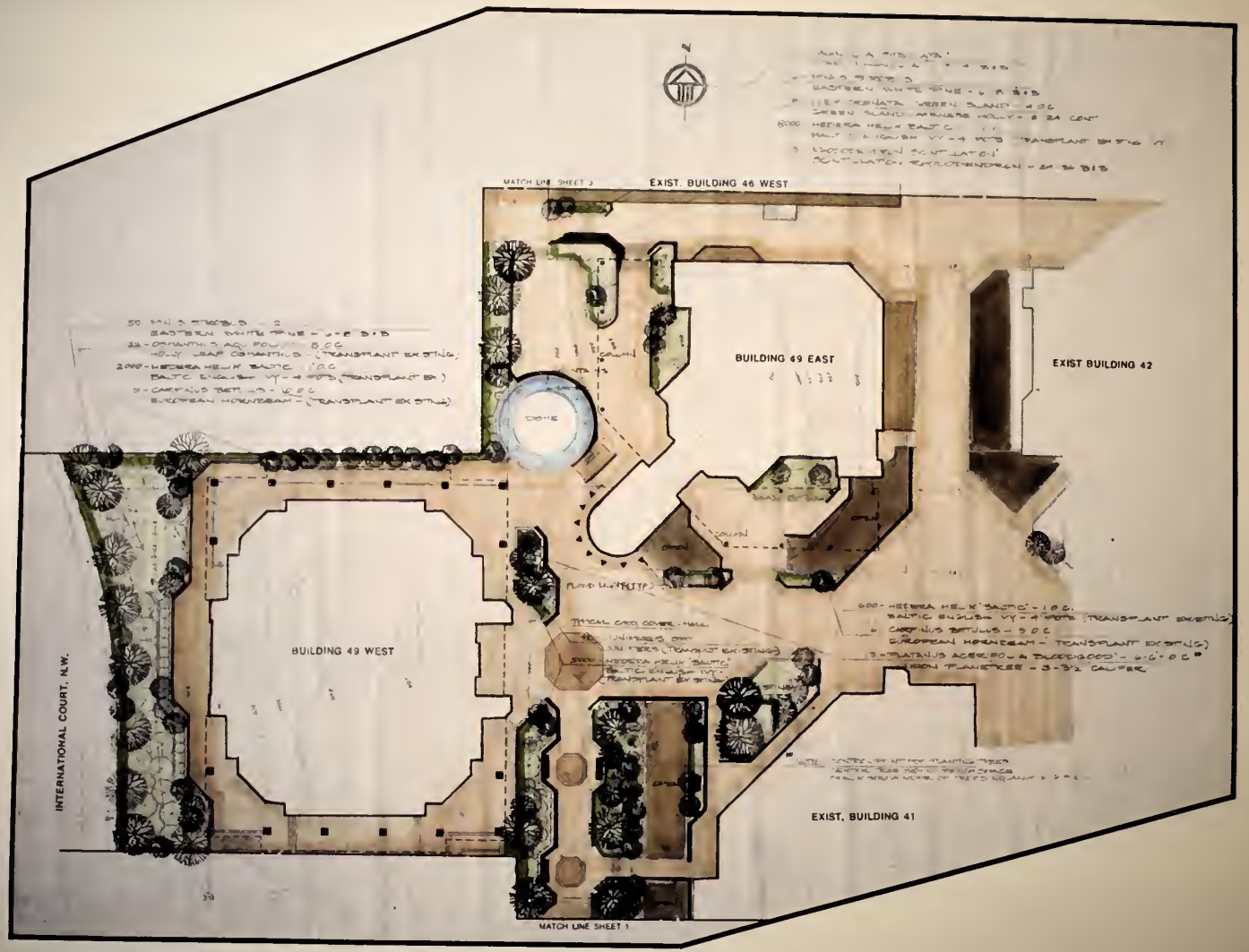
49 (EAST) PROPOSED FACULTY OFFICE/ LITTLE THEATRE COMPLEX

49 (WEST) PROPOSED SCIENCE / CLASSROOM BUILDING

UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PHASE III

SCALE 1"=60'

BRYANT & BRYANT AIA
ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS



LANDSCAPE PLAN PART II

41
32
UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT

18 April 1991 - 6

UDC - Phase III A

EAST ELEVATION

18 April 1991 - 6

UDC - Phase III A

campus, and he noted that the Commission had previously reviewed the landscape plan. The Chairman had some questions about the lack of planting in the plaza; Mr. Bryant said the space was small and needed for assembly, but he noted that there were some planters there now and said the new landscaping would be softer than the existing. There were no further questions, and the working drawings were unanimously approved. Exhibit F

E. Department of Veterans Affairs

CFA 18/APR/91-7, Veterans Affairs Medical Center,North Capitol and Irving Streets, N.W. Design for addition to main hospital building. Staff member Jose Martinez said this would be a four story addition to the service area in the rear of the hospital and would contain office space and shops. He introduced the architect, who showed drawings, explained the siting within a court, and said the materials would be the same as those used for the hospital. He noted that the addition would be screened by trees. There were no objections and the project was unanimously approved. Exhibit G

F. General Services Administration

CFA 18/APR/91-8, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. Exterior renovation, handicapped ramp, and rooftop cooling towers. Mr. Martinez noted that the members had seen the site on their pre-meeting tour. He introduced architect George Notter of Notter, Finegold, Alexander to discuss the proposed renovations. Mr. Notter said the "store front" doors on Vermont Avenue would be removed and replaced with bronze doors of an archival design. On Eye Street there would be a small ramp for handicapped access and some modification to the steps to accommodate it; there would also be an interior ramp. The four cooling towers on the roof would be replaced with smaller ones. Mr. Notter showed drawings of the one visible from Lafayette Square, with and without screening, to illustrate its impact on the White House area. The members preferred a scheme placing the tower parallel to the building facades on the orthogonal streets, rather than Vermont Avenue, and they thought it less obtrusive without the screening; it was suggested that all the cooling towers be painted a limestone color to blend with the building. The entrance modifications and the handicapped ramp were approved. Exhibit H

Mr. Martinez said there was another part to the submission, a temporary handicapped ramp on Eye Street that would be in place only while work was being done on the Vermont Avenue entrance. This would be designed by Bernard Johnson, architects. Scott Knudson from that firm showed drawings of a concrete ramp with steel panel walls. It would require the removal of a hedge in front of the building. The Commission found the design completely

unacceptable and suggested that GSA construct a simple wood ramp and place it behind the hedge, over the areaway. Exhibit I

G. Smithsonian Institution

CFA 18/APR/91-9, Hirshhorn Museum, Independence Avenue at 7th Street, S.W. Plaza resurfacing and landscaping. Confirmation of working drawings. (Previous: CFA 13/DEC/90-4, CFA 25/OCT/90-4, CFA 19/OCT/89-1.) Mr. Carson announced that the Smithsonian had found a way to fund the resurfacing of the entire plaza in granite, as the Commission had strongly recommended. He said the rest of the submission was for confirmation of working drawings that did not vary from the conceptual version the Commission had previously approved, except for the addition of an entrance for the handicapped through the west garden wall. He introduced landscape architect James Urban to discuss this change and the granite paving for the plaza.

Mr. Urban showed drawings for the handicapped entrance, which would come in from the Mall through a section of the 9-foot wide hollow wall and up to the plaza. He said there was only a small difference in grade at this point. There were no objections to this change and it was unanimously approved.

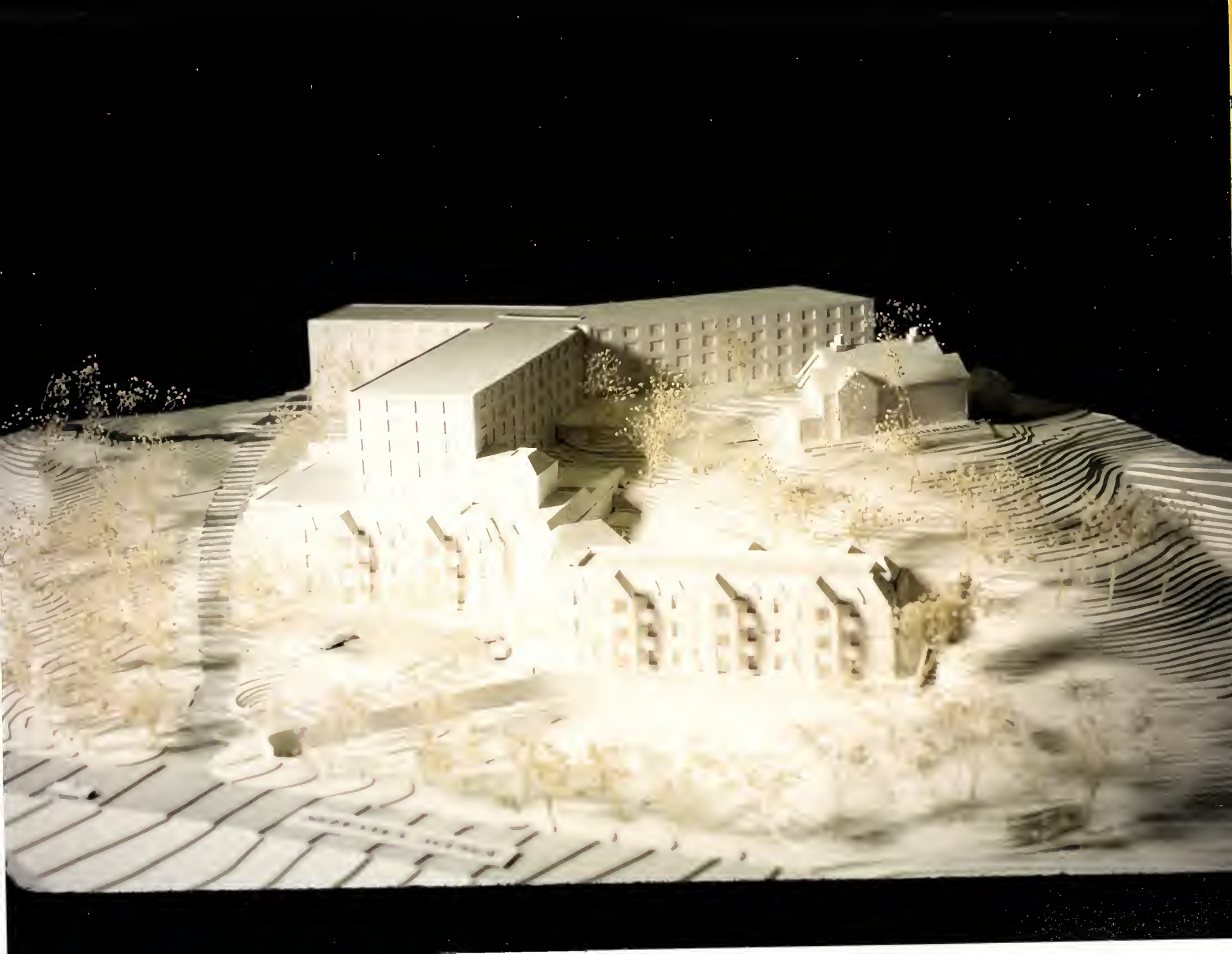
(The Chairman left the meeting at this point and turned the gavel over to Vice-Chairman Porterfield.)

Mr. Urban then discussed the granite and his proposal that, because of the great size of the space, two colors be used--a light color (cedar rose) for the central space and a darker color coming off the street and around the perimeter of the circle. In answer to Ms. Chatfield-Taylor's question, he said the size of the stones in the central space would be approximately 3 1/2 by 7 feet, and they would be 3 1/2 inches thick to accommodate fasteners for the sculpture. The members had no objections to the use of two colors and were pleased that the plaza would be paved in granite rather than concrete; they unanimously approved the final working drawings for both the plaza and the landscaping. Exhibit J

H. District of Columbia Government, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs

1. Shipstead-Luce Act

a. S.L. 91-59, 6200 Oregon Avenue, N.W. Addition of new facilities, Army Distaff Foundation. Design development. (Previous: CFA 21/FEB/91.) Mr. Carson recalled that when this project was submitted at the previous meeting, the members had asked for more information on sight lines from the park, the location of existing trees, and a topographical map. He noted a model in the room which supplied some of the requested information, and then introduced Bob Weich from Sasaki Associates, who in turn



S.L. 91 - 59

6200 Oregon Avenue, N.W. -

Army Distaff

introduced Marcia Lee, the designer, to show sight line drawings, maps and slides of the area. After looking at the material and listening to Ms. Lee's presentation, the members agreed that the project would have no serious impact on Rock Creek Park, and it was unanimously approved. Exhibit K

b. Appendix I. The Appendix was approved without objection.

2. Old Georgetown Act

a. Appendix II. The Appendix was approved without objection.

3. Confirmation of approval of Appendices dated 21 March 1991. Report. The Appendices were approved without objection. Mr. Peck recused himself from taking any action on O.G. 91-56, 1100 30th Street, N.W.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m. and the members left to inspect a number of objects proposed for acquisition by the Freer Gallery of Art.

I. Freer Gallery

CFA 18/APR/91-10, Inspection of Acquisitions. Upon inspection, the acquisitions were unanimously approved.

Item not on the printed agenda. Earlier in the day the Commission met in Executive Session at the request of the White House Liaison office of the National Park Service, National Capital Region, to review a design for new guardhouses for the White House grounds. The members thought they had a temporary character, not suited to the location, and were too white in color. The Park Service was asked to study a more formal design in a neutral color, something akin to a guardhouse that might be used for a large estate.

Signed,

Charles H. Atherton
Secretary

EXHIBIT A

TESTIMONY OF THE

COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES, TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

"Excellence in Public Architecture"

14 MARCH 1991

Good morning, Mr. Chairman. I am Robert Peck, and I am happy to be here on behalf of the Commission of Fine Arts and its Chairman, J. Carter Brown, who could not be here today. I have with me Charles Atherton, the Commission's Secretary.

The subject of design excellence in public architecture and how to achieve it has been a concern of the Commission since its inception more than eighty years ago. As you can imagine there is a considerable body of experience that's been accumulated over time and I think we can say with some assurance that the wider we cast our nets in search of talented designers, the more likely it is we will get good design.

This has been true from the earliest days of our republic. There have been many examples of the government tapping the very best talent there was to offer, and the beauty of our city today is eloquent testimony to the wisdom of this approach. From the Capitol to the White House, from Market Square to the Vietnam Memorial, we have through the competition process achieved some remarkably distinguished designs, and we should consider ourselves very fortunate.

Not in all cities, nor in all undertakings in the construction of public buildings, are we so lucky. Where the allure of a prestige location is not present, where the program for the building is prosaic, the results can be disappointing.

More often than not, however, the reasons are just as much the fault of a bureaucracy that is indifferent to the need for design excellence as it is an uninspired or otherwise mediocre professional response.

Competitions are no cure-all -- no guarantee of success, but they certainly point the way toward increasing the odds of getting good design. More than anything, they bring a sense of excitement and importance to the undertaking, a chance to focus on the public aspects of a work in the largest sense of that word, and with luck the chance to kindle a bit of pride. Anytime one can generate those ingredients there is going to be a lot of interest, and that is the secret in obtaining first rate designers.

There has been a recurring feeling in certain quarters that competitions are a lot of trouble. They take time, they cost money, they can result in controversy, and they are not always a sure bet.

But in the long run, is it not better to take the time, the care, and the chance, if the final result is something of which the public can be proud? The Commission believes it is.

Now having championed the cause of competitions, let me identify a few things that can limit their effectiveness. No

competition, no matter how brilliant the designs or designers, can be much of a success if there is no one on the jury who can recognize brilliance when he sees it.

Thus jury selection becomes a critical part of the process. To mandate a government-wide system of holding competitions to secure design services would be foolhardy indeed if there were no way of controlling the selection of those who ultimately make the choice of design. Much time and energy, and a good deal of wisdom is needed to impanel a good jury.

Another critical area is the formulation of a wise program for the building at hand, one that inspires and opens doors to ideas rather than limits choices at the outset. If it constricts, confines, or goes too far in shaping a concept of design, then it likely will fall short of the competition's intended goal, and much of the creative energies that otherwise would be brought to bear on bringing forth a distinguished design will be wasted on a second-rate solution.

Our last point -- some of us consider it the most important of all -- is that the competition is for the selection of the designer, not the design. It must be remembered that ideally the design process, if it is to succeed, must rely heavily on the fruitful collaboration of designer and client. No great designs are made in black boxes, yet a competition, by its very nature,

excludes this kind of collaboration throughout. It is not until the competition is over and the choice of designer is made that this vital process can even begin. So it is a most important factor, and everybody ought to be aware of its importance before entering into the competition. Many an otherwise successful competition has failed in the final analysis simply because this absolute necessity was not recognized at the outset and bitter controversy over the design resulted.

Let me say once again that the Commission is encouraged and excited by the prospects of creating better public buildings and better public art. The way in which design affects our lives for the better at every level is a concept now widely acclaimed, and whatever your committee can do through these hearings or through the enactment of legislation to further these ends will be greatly in the public interest.

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS AND COMPETITIONS

Background Support Paper to Testimony

Senate Hearing on Design Competitions

14 March 1991

Prior to the establishment of the Commission of Fine Arts in 1910, it was the practice of Congress to authorize the appointment of separate committees to advise on the merits of each project involving monuments and other works of art. As a rule, the committee was composed of laymen not particularly qualified to give advice on such matters. Upon completion of a project, the committee would disband, leaving Congress without a recognized body to whom matters of art and design could be referred. The process was confusing and wasteful.

Several attempts were made to remedy the problem. Finally, in January 1909, a committee representing the American Institute of Architects appealed to President Theodore Roosevelt to establish a Bureau of Fine Arts. This Bureau or Council, as it was to be known, would advise on plans for all future public buildings, bridges, parks, sculpture, painting, and other work in which design plays an integral part. President Roosevelt replied on the same day, asked for a list of thirty qualified individuals to sit on a Council of Fine Arts, and instructed his cabinet officers to seek the advice of the Council on matters pertaining to architecture, selection of sites, landscaping, sculpture, and painting.

In March of 1909 President Taft was inaugurated, and while

he was much in favor of an arts commission, he believed that it should be established by Act of Congress, not by Executive Order. Therefore, he abolished the Council but supported Congressional legislation to create a similar commission. The bill for such a commission was introduced into the Senate by Senator Elihu Root of New York.

In a letter addressed to the Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts commemorating its 25th anniversary in 1935, Mr. Root told of its early legislative history, ending his recollections with the following thought:

> "And so, without creation of any power of legal compulsion, there was brought to the service of the Government the authority of competent opinion upon questions of art arising in the course of administration, and widespread and habitual deference to such an opinion has saved the Government and the community from God knows how many atrocities."

Since its inception in May 1910, the Commission has been called upon to fulfill its obligations in various capacities. Where those obligations were ill-defined or non-existent, new legislation was enacted to fill the void. The most obvious of these laws were those governing private property in the District of Columbia: the first designed to protect federal interests under the Shipstead-Luce Act of 1930, and the second to protect

the newly created historic district of Georgetown in 1950. Commission jurisdiction, however, has never been confined solely to the District of Columbia. Other laws were enacted of regional and national significance, as well. Two of these laws would be worth mentioning in particular.

On 24 August 1912, the Panama Canal Act made provision for the Commission of Fine Arts to report to the President with its recommendations on "the artistic character of the structures of the canal." In order to carry out that order, several members of the Commission visited the Canal Zone by invitation of the Canal Commission. The Commission reviewed everything from a hotel in Colon to breakwater lights and signals. It was the Commission which advised Congress in 1915 against construction of two enormous monuments which were thought inappropriate for the utilitarian character of the canal and the nature of the surrounding countryside.

The American Battle Monuments Act of March 1923 also invoked Commission expertise. The Act, as amended in June 1946, governs the creation of overseas memorials to American servicemen of the First and Second World Wars. The Act requires approval by the Commission of Fine Arts prior to the Battle Monuments Commission's acceptance of a proposed memorial design. Over the years, the Commission reviewed a number of memorial designs relative to the Battle Monuments Act. Among the earliest of these were memorials for Chateau Thierry and Verdun, submitted in 1927 and 1928 respectively, and one of the most recent was

submitted in 1987 for the Solomon Islands War Memorial, Hill 72, Skyline Drive in Guadalcanal.

Over the years Congress has requested the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts on a number of issues. The subject matter has ranged from the design of federal buildings across the country to such topics as the advisability of purchasing the Hearst Art Collection (1938), provisions for an official vice-presidential residence (1957), the liberalization of the tariff laws concerning works of art (1958), and establishing the St. Mary's National Monument Commission (1963).

Both the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Interior have frequently consulted the Commission. With the former, the Commission has been asked to review designs for memorials in many of the states and territories commemorating wars spanning two centuries. The Department of the Interior has asked for opinions, sometimes on site, on a variety of far-ranging matters including the west visitors' entrance and administration building for Yellowstone National Park (1925), a new hotel complex for Yosemite National Park (1916), the landscaping and administration building for the Statue of Liberty (1937-40), and the creation of a memorial at Ellis Island in New York (1965).

Many of the projects brought before the Commission of Fine Arts have been in the nature of competitions. Each competition seemed to provide its own set of unique problems. Each was treated on a case-by-case basis, more-or-less a product of trial and error from which the Commission gained in knowledge and

experience. Two of the earliest cases, both in 1911, were projects located in Ohio. The first was a memorial design for Fort Recovery.

The Secretary of War asked that the Commission of Fine Arts not only select the artists who were to compete but also serve as jury. Of the eleven entries submitted that November, the Commission selected two: the first was superior artistically, the second was thought mediocre but suited the inferior program. The Commission also found itself facing the problem of disconcerted individuals and groups, most particularly the Memorial Commission, which had its own ideas as to the qualifications of the entries. In this case, the client had not been invited to participate.

The second competition for 1911 was the Perry Monument at Put-in-Bay, Ohio. This request for advice came from Congress, which had set up the Interstate Board of Perry's Victory Centennial Commission. The Board promptly asked the Commission of Fine Arts to write the competition program and the Commission referred the Board to the American Institute of Architects. The Institute had regular forms sufficiently explicit for most programs. The Commission provided the names of three architecture professors to act as consultants. Additionally, the Commission recommended the Board hire a competent advisor. Nevertheless, the Commission did accept the invitation to act as jury, visited the site, and that December sent an invitation to the Perry Memorial Board to attend the jury deliberation. The

Commission considered 54 entries, initially, narrowed those down to six, then explained the merits of those remaining entries to the Perry Board. Together, the Commission and the Board selected the competition winner.

Finally, mention should be made of a competition involving the Department of State. Just before America entered the First World War, the United States was asked to contribute a sculpture group for placement on the grand staircase of the Peace Palace at the Hague. The Department of State conducted its own competition, inviting a large group of artists, only one of whom responded. State approached the Commission for advice. The Commission, through State, asked approximately thirty artists to submit photographs of work already completed. The Commission then selected from this body of material the artist it thought best able to represent the United States with a sculpture for the Hague. In addition, the Commission agreed to keep track of the work, reviewing various designs on the basis of artistry and symbolism along with maquettes as they developed. The statue which represents justice and hope was finally completed and unveiled in 1925 to great acclaim.

The Commission of Fine Arts has participated in numerous competitions during the intervening years, though as of late, rarely as jury. It continues to review the results of many of these ongoing events which have included not only memorials, but major buildings, as well. The Commission has had more than eighty years of experience and has witnessed any number of

variations on this theme. As the three examples of early involvement by the Commission show, some of the problems encountered during the opening decades of the century occasionally afflict competitions today. Nevertheless, the benefits of the competition process are equally clear. When the process provides flexibility and integrates client, program, and jury, then the results are bound to be positive.

Washington itself offers some of the best reasons for advocating design competitions. One need only gaze west down Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol Building to see the splendid effect. Here, on a street that so displeased a newly inaugurated president thirty years ago, an incredible change has taken place. Through the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, as client and intermediary between the private sector and federal and district interests, buildings and public spaces of great distinction have been reclaimed or built. Much of it has been the result of competitions.

The Navy Memorial and Freedom Plaza offer breathing space for the pedestrian on a scale appropriate to the avenue. The restoration of and additions to the Willard Hotel, the renovation of the Old Post Office, the creation of new buildings such as Market Square, and the continuing design development of the proposed ICTC Building in the Federal Triangle, all illustrate the remarkable architectural and civic design sophistication possible despite the current complexity of competition programs and packages.

A point not to be overlooked is the fact that competitions have been an acceptable method of achieving design excellence for centuries, nationally as well as internationally. This city has repeatedly benefited by such infusions of talent. For proof, we need only look at the Capitol Building and the White House or, more recently, projects such as the Intelsat Headquarters Building on Connecticut Avenue and the Canadian Embassy on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Of course, the competition process is not always a success.

For decades the Commission reviewed designs for the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial intended for a vaguely defined site in West Potomac Park. In 1960, a major competition was held drawing nearly 600 entries. The winning entry, selected by a jury chosen by the Memorial Commission itself, was sent on to the Commission of Fine Arts. The Commission reluctantly withheld approval. Here is a case where the jury, selected by the client, neglected to consider the Public Law which carefully specified that location, scale, design, and materials complement the context of the site with respect to the federal precinct in general and the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials in particular. Despite subsequent alterations, the winning design was eventually dropped. A new firm also met with disapproval and, in 1975, yet a third group was retained, earning final design confirmation in 1990. The original winning entry had been selected without regard to context, presumably a primary goal of the program. The jury failed.

A client with conflicting ideas cannot deliver a workable program. A program that lacks direction will lead to confusion on the part of the competitors and jury and misunderstanding on the part of all concerned. A jury, no matter how competent its individual members, if divorced from the client or the program, will find it difficult to complete its objective. A beautifully composed program, without consideration of the client or the site, will not provide the tools necessary to create a worthy product, no matter how talented the jury or the artist. It is on these points that the success of competitions hinge.

Many years ago, the Commission of Fine Arts reported on the dangers of a centralized artistic authority (Art and Government 1951-53). The Commission believed that the ultimate goal of competitions is to promote a diversity of artistic expression indigenous to the various peoples and regions of the country. It further observed that a centralized approach to competitions runs the risk of encouraging only one aesthetic value, which ultimately leads to artistic stagnation. The report concluded that to encourage artists' competitive spirit and diversity, competitions should not be confined by the narrow view of one school of thought.

There are, of course, alternatives to a central authority. Responsibility for the selection of juries and artists might be shared, under a flexible format, by the local and/or federal agencies affected as well as by professionals in the various design fields. The Commission would be happy to work toward

achieving this goal.

As for competitions themselves, the first step should be the creation of a concise program, tailored to the project. The program should be clear in its intent without limiting artistic expression. It should specify to what extent the client and representatives of the public may participate in or be privy to the deliberations of the jury. The jury should be encouraged to give weight to the opinions and concerns expressed by the client.

Finally, it should be made clear from the start that a winning entry will be treated as a concept only and may be subject to considerable change as a result of detailed dialogue with the client and whatever design review processes may apply. A competition should be thought of as the selection of a designer and the exploration of ideas, not a contractual agreement on a design.

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

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EXHIBIT B

2 May 1991

Dear Mr. Stanton:

The Commission is happy to approve the renovation of the Commerce Department Building's Baldridge Hall entrances for the new White House Visitor Center. Upgrading the doors and installing blue awnings, as proposed by the architect, Ms. Mary Oehrlein, will be a big improvement.

Sincerely,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. Robert Stanton
Regional Director
National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

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EXHIBIT C

2 May 1991

Dear Mr. Stanton:

At your request the Commission of Fine Arts met with Mr. McDaniel and Ms. Whipple on 18 April 1991 to discuss plans for a new Ellipse visitor facility. We applaud the effort to consolidate the miscellaneous structures now cluttering the site and feel the architect, Ms. Mary Oehrlein, has proposed the appropriate character for the facility, though some additional study is in order:

As we studied the site stake-out, the model, and the drawings, several recommendations developed. First, the building should be as small as possible. In that regard we suggested that the architect explore locating some of the storage on the basement level. There may even be some merit to eliminating public use of the lower level altogether in favor of service and storage down there. The Commission's second point includes the shape and orientation of the building. A centralized geometry without using one side as a service yard has a number of advantages, the principle reason being the building's visibility from all sides. Our discussions with the architect give us every confidence that these points can be easily addressed.

In closing, I want to stress the Commission's concurrence with the proposed architectural treatment. The grey metal roof, off-white stucco walls, and columned portico have a quiet propriety. Though the building's functions are purely utilitarian, the relationship to the White House requires a special architectural character. We are convinced that some

extra design effort is well worthwhile, and that this is not a place for arbitrary budget constraints. We look forward to continuing our collective efforts toward excellence in all elements of the White House environment.

Sincerely,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. Robert Stanton
Regional Director
National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

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2 May 1991

EXHIBIT D

Dear Captain Jones:

The Commission of Fine Arts was happy to meet with you and sculptor Leo Irrera at its 18 April meeting to review the last two concept designs for bas-reliefs at the Navy Memorial, and final designs for six other panels.

The concept design for "Inland Operations/Vietnam" was approved, with some concern expressed about the great depth of relief at the bottom of the panel, its relationship to the much lower relief of the other elements, and to the two panels that will ultimately flank it at the memorial.

The concept design for "Navy in Space" was approved.

Final designs for "Naval Academy," "Naval Exploration," "Farragut at Mobile Bay," "Merchant Marine/Armed Guard," "Marine Corps/Inchon," and "Silent Service" were approved with the following recommendations:

"Merchant Marine/Armed Guard": The ties holding the tank to the deck of the ship should be slightly heavier so that it is clear that the tank is lashed to the ship.

"Marine Corps/Inchon": The right leg and foot of the central figure look awkward and should be restudied.

"Silent Service": The plaque as a whole is very effective, but there is something disconcerting about the relationship of the two submarines, which appear to be in different planes. This may not be so apparent when the plaque is installed and viewed from above. The best course may be to go ahead with the casting and installation and have the Commission view the panel; if it is unacceptable, it could then be redone.

The Commission also reviewed the proposed titles for the plaques and their placement. There was some question about the size of the lettering for the sculptors' names, which should be smaller than the title, and the desirability of separating the word "sculptor" from the name, by a colon. Alternatively, this credit line could be in italics. The Commission would like to see an example, with the exact size and style of lettering proposed, before casting.

There were two suggestions made regarding the titles themselves. For "The Great White Fleet," it was thought that "Speak softly and carry a big stick" would be more effective than "Projecting American power and prestige." For "U.S. Navy Supply Corps," the suggestion was that removing the "DDG-51" and "AOE-6" following the names of the ships would simplify and shorten the title, bringing it more in line with the others.

Sincerely,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Captain Robert S. Jones
Captain, U.S. Navy (Ret.)
United States Navy Memorial Foundation
Box 12728
Arlington, VA 22209-8728

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EXHIBIT E

2 May 1991

Dear Mr. Freeman:

During its meeting of 18 April 1991, the Commission reviewed a concept design for a new heating and refrigeration plant which will replace the existing facility at the Pentagon Reservation. The members are pleased with the direction of the proposal, especially with respect to its low profile, and commend the effort to infuse the site with landscape material. This major element should be an integral part of initial construction as part of a gateway to the Capital City.

In providing general concept approval, the Commission would like to address one aspect of the design that could profit by additional study: namely, the two exhaust stacks. Beyond reducing the proposed height from 90'-0" to the vicinity of 65'-0", the members believe that consolidating the stacks would provide an excellent opportunity to create an architectural design feature of great merit that would be more acceptable than the free-standing stacks.

The Commission looks forward to working with you on this project and offers the assistance of the staff should any questions arise prior to our next review.

Sincerely,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. L.W. Freeman
Director, Real Estate and Facilities
Department of Defense
Washington Headquarters Services
Washington, D.C. 20301-1155

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EXHIBIT F

2 May 1991

Dear Mr. Lundy:

During its meeting of 18 April 1991, the Commission reviewed and approved site and building plans for 49 East and 49 West under Phase III-A of the continued development of the University of the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. Russell G. Lundy, P.E.
Project Manager
Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Public Works
Design, Engineering, and Construction Administration
2000 14th Street, N.W. 5th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20009

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EXHIBIT G

2 May 1991

Dear Mr. Williams:

During its meeting 18 April 1991, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed and approved a proposal for an addition to the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, on Irving and North Capitol Streets, N.W.

The matching of the materials of the addition with those already present, plus the painting of the louvers to match, will help in blending the addition with the existing structure. Nevertheless, we encourage the use of added landscaping in the green area in front of the proposed work to minimize its impact on the site.

We are happy to work with you on this and future projects at the Medical Center.

Sincerely,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. Timothy B. Williams
Medical Center Director
Department of Veterans Affairs
Medical Center
50 Irving Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20422

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EXHIBIT H

2 May 1991

Dear Mr. Handley:

During its meeting 18 April 1991, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed the proposal for the general building renovation and for the rooftop cooling towers for the Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office Building at 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.

The Commission has no objection to the modifications to the entrances, including the replacement of doors, whose design is based on the original, nor to the proposed permanent handicapped access ramp on I Street.

In terms of the rooftop cooling towers, there was no objection to replacing the towers with ones that reduce their height. However, we recommend the elimination of the proposed screen, which, if installed, would only bring unnecessary attention to an area that should be minimized in its visibility. At the meeting, the recommendations presented were favorably received. These involve: (1) the orientation of the cooling towers in a way that will give the appearance of being parallel to the building wall over which they are most visible; and (2) the painting of the cooling towers in a color that will match the building's limestone facing.

As always, the staff is available should questions arise.

Sincerely,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. James C. Handley
Regional Administrator
General Services Administration
National Capital Region
Washington, D.C. 20407

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EXHIBIT I

2 May 1991

Dear Mr. Andrukonis:

During its meeting 18 April 1991, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed the designs for the proposed temporary handicapped access ramp at the I Street entrance to the Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office Building on 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.

After inspecting the site and reviewing the proposed design, material selection, and removal of the existing hedge, the design was unanimously disapproved. We encourage you to study other feasible alternatives. This may involve building over the areaway with lighter, more temporary materials. The concrete and metal panel scheme out on the sidewalk which was presented to the Commission would be overly obtrusive, heavy, and totally inappropriate in character.

If any questions should arise, feel free to contact the staff at 504-2200.

Sincerely,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. Robert L. Andrukonis
Chief
Architectural/Structural Section
General Services Administration
National Capital Region
Washington, D.C. 20407

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EXHIBIT J

2 May 1991

Dear Mr. Dillman:

The Commission was delighted to meet with you and Jim Urban to discuss the final design and material selection for the renovation of the Hirshhorn Museum terrace on 18 April 1991. There can be little argument that this long wait has been well worth the result. The granite pavement adds just the right touch of elegance, while the increase in landscape material helps to soften the appearance of the museum in general. In addition, the members commend the resolution of the handicapped ramp from the Mall, especially in light of the fact that it is an element only recently added to the renovation program.

The Commission is pleased to give its approval to this project and looks forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. Robert P. Dillman, P.E.
Director
Office of Design and Construction
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C. 20560

EXHIBIT K

AGENDA ITEM EXHIBIT

18 April 1991

NO.	ADDRESS AND OWNER	PROJECT
S.L. 91-59	6200 Oregon Avenue, N.W. Knollwood Army Distaff Foundation	Addition of new facilities - conceptual

ACTION: No objection to concept design as developed. The addition will have little impact on Rock Creek Park. In addition, the proposed landscaping will be an improvement to the existing facility. Provide working drawings and material samples for permit review when ready.